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United States General Accounting Office

Report to Congressional Requesters

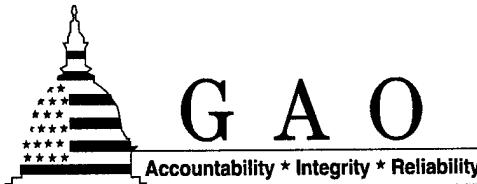
September 2000

PERSONNEL PRACTICES

Career Appointments
Granted Political
Appointees From
October 1998
Through June 2000



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United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

General Government Division

B-285641

September 18, 2000

The Honorable Christopher S. Bond
Chairman, Committee on Small Business
United States Senate

The Honorable Joe Scarborough
Chairman, Subcommittee on Civil Service
Committee on Government Reform
House of Representatives

The Honorable Henry J. Hyde
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives

At your request, we are monitoring and reviewing the appointment of political appointees to career positions in the executive branch. You recently asked us for an interim report on these "conversions," and this report responds to your request. As agreed, it provides (1) the number of political appointees who converted to career service positions between October 1, 1998, and June 30, 2000; and (2) certain information about the political positions they held and the career positions to which they converted. Forty-five federal agencies provided us with information on the number of conversions and associated positions (see app. I). We will report at a later date, as agreed with you, on all conversions that will have occurred through April 2001 and on certain issues related to those conversions, such as whether agencies followed proper procedures when making appointments.

Political appointments are generally made by the administration in office and are noncareer appointments. These appointments are generally noncompetitive and are therefore made without regard to the rules for competition that govern career appointments. However, while serving under a political appointment, appointees can apply and compete for positions that are filled through career appointments. Career appointments do not end with the change of administrations and are to be filled only after fair and open competition has occurred to ensure that all applicants receive fair and equitable treatment.

Political appointees fill positions in the executive branch under different types of appointments; for example, they can receive Schedule C

appointments to General Schedule positions to support and advocate the president's goals and policies. The types of appointments this report covers are listed and defined in the scope and methodology section of this letter. As we have in past reports on the conversion issue, which are listed at the end of this report, we have included information in this report on the appointment of former legislative branch employees to career positions in the executive branch.

Results

On the basis of information submitted by the 45 agencies and our discussions with them, we determined that 57 former political appointees and legislative branch employees were converted to career positions during the 21 months from October 1998 through June 2000. Nine appointees were former legislative branch employees, and the other 48 appointees were former political appointees at executive branch agencies. The 57 appointments were made by 18 of the 45 agencies. The other 27 agencies, according to their reports, did not appoint political appointees or former legislative branch employees to career positions. Most of the 57 appointments were at the Departments of Justice (13), Energy (7), Commerce (7), Defense (5), and Labor (5).

Of the 57 appointments, 10 were to career positions in the Senior Executive Service (SES), which is the federal government's top career management level.¹ Another 38 career appointments were to career General Schedule (GS) positions, usually at pay grades 13, 14, or 15, which are the three highest GS pay grades. Finally, 9 of the 57 appointments were to various other career positions, such as Assistant U.S. Attorney positions at the Department of Justice. The 57 appointments represented far less than 1 percent of the aggregate number of career appointments in fiscal year 1999 to SES positions, GS-7 to GS-15 positions, and other career positions.

Appointments frequently were made to newly established positions. Agencies reported making 25 conversions to new positions, and most of the appointees to these new positions (18 of the 25 appointees) were already employed at the appointing agencies. For 41 of the 57 appointments, the individuals who were appointed were already working at the agencies that appointed them.

¹ Agencies reported 12 more appointments to career SES positions that we did not include. The individuals who were appointed had been in limited-term SES positions. Because limited-term SES positions can include political appointees, we asked agencies to report career appointments whenever limited-term SES positions were involved. However, in these 12 cases, we found after further review that the 12 appointees were career employees rather than political appointees.

Finally, the annual salaries appointees received upon their career appointments differed in many instances from the annual salaries they last received in their prior positions. Prior salary data were available for 56 appointments; and for 25 of them, the new salary and the old salary were identical or within \$1,000. For the remaining 31 appointments, the new salaries were higher or lower than the old salaries by more than \$1,000. The new salary was higher in 17 cases and lower in 14 cases. Appendix II contains information on each of the 57 appointments.

During presidential election years, because of the expected high turnover of political appointees, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) seeks to ensure that each political-to-career conversion complies with appropriate federal personnel rules. On February 18, 2000, OPM issued a memorandum to agencies explaining its clearance process for conversions. As part of that process, OPM must approve each proposed conversion through January 2001. From February 2000 through June 2000, OPM approved the conversion of 12 Schedule C and noncareer SES appointees and rejected 1.

Agency Comments

We obtained comments on a draft of this report from the Director, OPM. The Director said that OPM found the information in our report helpful and said that OPM will be using it as the agency continues its oversight of the conversion process.

We also confirmed the data shown in appendix II by sending it to the respective agencies that reported it. The agencies made some additions or corrections to the data, such as filling in information that was missing or correcting a date. Appendix II reflects the changes that were made by the agencies.

Scope and Methodology

To ascertain the number of conversions from political positions to career positions, we asked 45 federal agencies (see app. I) to complete our data collection instrument each time they made (or make) a career appointment of a former political appointee or legislative branch employee between October 1, 1998, and April 30, 2001. We also asked them to submit a negative report for each month in which they had not made a conversion.

As expressed on our data collection form, we defined political appointees as those individuals who received an appointment to the following positions after April 1, 1997:

- Schedule C;
- noncareer SES, including limited-term SES and limited emergency SES; and
- presidential appointees, including Executive Level, and noncareer Ambassadors.

We included in our definition individuals who were employees in the Executive Office of the President and who were first hired after January 20, 1993. We also asked agencies to report on the appointment of former legislative branch employees to career positions in the executive branch.

Schedule C, noncareer SES, and presidential appointees are appointed by an administration to support and advocate the president's goals and policies. Schedule C appointees generally receive noncompetitive appointments to excepted service positions graded GS-15 and below that involve determining policy or that require a close, confidential relationship with the agency head or other key officials of the agency. Noncareer SES appointees can receive noncompetitive appointments to SES positions that normally involve advocating, formulating, and directing the programs and policies of the administration. Limited-term SES appointments are time-limited, nonrenewable appointments for up to 3 years. These appointments can be made noncompetitively. Limited emergency SES appointments also can be made noncompetitively, and the appointees serve at the pleasure of the agency head.

We established the October 1998 to April 2001 coverage period, with agreement of your representatives, in order to include conversions that might occur in the months before and after the November 2000 presidential and congressional elections. We used June 2000 as the ending date for this interim report because it was the latest full month for which we had data.

In completing the data collection instrument, the 45 agencies were asked to provide information about the career position to which the individuals were appointed. Specifically, we asked them to provide the position title, the appointee's pay grade, annual salary, and appointment or entered-on-duty date. We also asked them to provide the title of the appointee's former position. In addition, we asked the agencies to provide the related Standard Form 50 for all appointments. These forms provide the official

record of a personnel action, such as an appointment. We used the Form 50s to obtain information about each appointee's prior position, such as annual salary, and to verify information that agencies provided on the data collection instrument. We did not make judgments regarding the qualifications of former political appointees and legislative branch employees for the career positions to which they were appointed.

We did our work in Washington, D.C., from April 1999 through July 2000 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

We are sending copies of this report to Representative Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Civil Service, House Committee on Government Reform; Senator John F. Kerry, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Small Business; Representative Dan Burton, Chairman, and Representative Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Government Reform; and the Honorable Janice R. Lachance, Director, OPM. In addition, copies will be sent to other congressional committees, the heads of the 45 agencies who reported information to us, and other interested parties. We will also make copies available to others on request.

Major contributors to this report were Richard W. Caradine, Assistant Director; Carolyn L. Samuels, Evaluator-in-Charge; and Domingo Nieves, Senior Evaluator. Please contact Mr. Caradine or me on (202) 512-8676 if you have any questions.



Michael Brostek
Associate Director, Federal Management
and Workforce Issues

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Listing of 45 Executive Branch Agencies and Departments Reviewed and Criteria Used to Select Them

The criteria used to select the executive branch agencies and departments were: (1) all cabinet-level departments and agencies, (2) agencies that had oversight or other regular responsibilities for federal workforce issues, and (3) departments and agencies of particular interest to the congressional requesters of the review. As a result, the following 45 agencies and departments were identified:

1. Department of Agriculture
2. Department of Commerce
3. Department of Defense (Office of the Secretary, Air Force, Army, and Navy)
4. Department of Education
5. Department of Energy
6. Department of Health and Human Services
7. Department of Housing and Urban Development
8. Department of the Interior
9. Department of Justice
10. Department of Labor
11. Department of State
12. Department of Transportation
13. Department of the Treasury
14. Department of Veterans Affairs
15. African Development Foundation
16. Commission on Civil rights
17. Consumer Product Safety Commission
18. Corporation for National Service

Appendix I
Listing of 45 Executive Branch Agencies and Departments Reviewed and Criteria Used to Select Them

19. Environmental Protection Agency
20. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
21. Export-Import Bank of the U.S.
22. Federal Aviation Administration
23. Federal Labor Relations Authority
24. Federal Maritime Commission
25. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service
26. Federal Retirement and Thrift Investment Board
27. Federal Trade Commission
28. U.S. Institute of Peace
29. Inter-American Foundation
30. U.S. International Trade Commission
31. Merit Systems Protection Board
32. National Endowment for the Arts
33. National Endowment for the Humanities
34. National Labor Relations Board
35. National Mediation Board
36. Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission
37. Office of Government Ethics
38. Office of Management and Budget
39. Office of Personnel Management
40. Office of Special Counsel

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41. Office of the U. S. Trade Representative
42. Overseas Private Investment Corporation
43. Peace Corps
44. Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
45. Small Business Administration

Noncareer Appointees Converted to Career, Career-Conditional, Career SES, and Term Appointments by Agency

Career, career-conditional, career SES, term appointment, and other position title and office	Career grade and salary ^a	Date appointed/entered on duty	Noncareer position title, office, and department	Type of appointment, noncareer grade and salary ^a
Department of Agriculture				
Program Analyst	GS-0343-13/03 \$64,949	06/04/00	Confidential Assistant to the Chief Natural Resources Conservation Service	Schedule C GS-0301-13/02 \$59,961
National Resource Conservation Service Outreach Division			Department of Agriculture	
Department of Commerce				
Government Liaison	GS-0301-14/10 \$85,978	11/22/98	Congressional Affairs Officer	Schedule C
Bureau of the Census			Bureau of Census	GM-0301-15/00
			Department of Commerce	\$90,767
Intergovernmental/Partnership Specialist ^b	GS-0301-13/02 \$59,961	01/31/99	Legislative Affairs Specialist	Schedule C GS-0301-13/02
Office of the Secretary			Office of the Secretary	\$59,961
Outreach Program Specialist ^b	ZA-0301-04/02 \$82,000	05/17/99	Senior Legislative Assistant	Legislative Branch Employee
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration			U.S. Senate	\$72,000
Supervisory International Trade Specialist	GS-1140-14/02 \$70,855	09/27/99	Special Assistant	Schedule C
International Trade Administration			Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Technology and Aerospace Industries	GS-0301-14/02
			Department of Commerce	\$66,707
Program Analyst ^b	ZA-0343-III/01 \$48,000	10/10/99	Legislative Affairs Specialist	Schedule C
Office of the Director			Office of the Secretary	GS-0301-11
National Institute of Standards and Technology			Department of Commerce	\$40,714
Regional Director	ES-0301-00/01 \$111,671	12/19/99	State Director	Schedule C
Economic Development Administration Denver Regional Office			Rural Development	GM-0301-15/00
			Department of Agriculture	\$92,354
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Affairs	ES-0301-00/06 \$130,200	06/04/00	Chief Economist	Noncareer SES
Economic & Statistics Administration			Economic & Statistics Administration	ES-0110-00/05
Department of Defense				
Program Analyst ^b	GS-0343-14/01 \$68,570	05/09/99	Program Analyst	Schedule C
Defense Security Cooperation Agency			Defense Security Cooperation Agency	GS-0343-13/04
			Department of Defense	\$63,829
Family Support Liaison ^b	GS-0301-15/10 \$104,851	11/21/99	Special Assistant for Family Advocacy & External Relations	Schedule C
Defense, Prisoner of War/Missing, Personnel Office			Defense, POW/Missing, Personnel Office	GS-0301-15/10
			Department of Defense	\$104,851
Program Analyst ^b	NH-0343-III/00 \$60,830	01/16/00	Staff Specialist	Schedule C
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense			Deputy Under Secretary of Defense	GS-0301-12/04
			Department of Defense	\$56,324
Foreign Affairs Specialist ^b	GS-0130-15/02 \$87,459	05/21/00	Defense Fellow	Schedule C
Threat Reduction Nonproliferation Policy			Washington Headquarters Services	GS-0301-15/02
			Department of Defense	\$87,459

Appendix II
Noncareer Appointees Converted to Career, Career-Conditional, Career SES, and Term Appointments by Agency

Career, career-conditional, career SES, term appointment, and other position title and office	Career grade and salary^a	Date appointed/entered on duty	Noncareer position title, office, and department	Type of appointment, noncareer grade and salary^a
Director of Defense Procurement, Acquisition & Technology Office of the Under Secretary of Defense	ES-1102-00/06 \$133,477	06/04/00	Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy Office of Management and Budget	Presidential Appointee EX-0301-03/00 \$133,477
Department of Education				
Management & Program Analyst ^b Office of Intergovernmental, Interagency Affairs	GS-0343-14/04 \$75,427	05/23/99	Special Assistant Office of Intergovernmental, Interagency Affairs Department of Education	Schedule C GS-0301-14/04 \$75,427
Management Analyst ^b Office of the Chief Information Officer	GS-0343-13/01 \$60,890	05/21/00	Special Assistant Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Department of Education	Schedule C GS-0301-13/01 \$60,890
Education Program Analyst ^b Office of Elementary & Secondary Education	GS-1720-14/01 \$71,954	06/04/00	Special Assistant Office of Elementary & Secondary Education Department of Education	Schedule C GS-0301-14/01 \$71,954
Department of Energy				
Foreign Affairs Specialist ^b Office of Nonproliferation & National Security	GS-0130-12/02 \$48,635	11/22/98	Staff Assistant Office of Intelligence Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0301-12/02 \$48,635
Deputy Director ^b Office of Counterintelligence	ES-0340-00/01 \$110,351	07/04/99	Professional Staff Member House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee
Director Office of Planning & Analysis	ES-0301-00/01 \$110,351	10/01/99	Senior Staff Advisor Office of Science Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0301-15/05 \$91,410
Budget Analyst Office of Chief Financial Officer	GS-0560-15/02 \$83,346	12/19/99	Staff Assistant Office of Chief Financial Officer Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0301-15/02 \$83,346
Program Specialist ^b Office of Intelligence	GS-0301-13/09 \$77,126	02/13/00	Senior Program Analyst Office of Intelligence Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0301-14/03 \$75,750
Associate Chief Financial Officer National Nuclear Security Administration	ES-0301-00/02 \$121,264	6/18/00	Associate Chief Financial Officer Budget, Planning, & Financial Management Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0505-15/10 \$110,028
Attorney Advisor ^b Immediate Office of the General Counsel	GS-0905-13/05 \$69,008	02/27/00	Special Assistant to the General Counsel (Attorney-Advisor) Office of the General Counsel Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0905-15/01 \$84,638

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Department of Health and Human Services				
Supervisory Tribal Child Support Program Specialist	GS-0101-15/10 \$110,028	05/21/00	Commissioner Administration for Native Americans, Administration for Children and Families Department of Health and Human Services	Presidential Appointee EX-0301-V/00 \$114,500
Child Support Enforcement				
Department of Housing and Urban Development				
Reform Issues Manager ^b Administration	GS-0301-15/08 \$99,474	02/28/99	Director Executive Secretariat Department of Housing and Urban Development	Schedule C GS-0301-15/08 \$99,474
Department of the Interior				
Director of Diversity and Human Resources ^b	ES-0340-00/04 \$125,900	06/06/99	Deputy Assistant Secretary Assistant Secretary Policy, Management & Budget Department of the Interior	Noncareer SES ES-0301-00/04 \$125,900
Reclamation Service Center Diversity & Human Resources Office				
Special Assistant to the Director Office of the Director	GS-0301-15/10 \$110,028	04/09/00	Special Assistant Special Assistant to the Commissioner	Noncareer SES ES-0301-00/04 \$130,200
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service				
Department of Justice				
Assistant U.S. Attorney U. S. Attorney's Office/Central Division, California	AD-0905-21/00 \$67,234	10/25/98	Deputy Director Violence Against Women Office Office of the Assistant Attorney General Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0905-15/02 \$80,391
Secretary Office of Automation, U.S. Attorney's Office, South Dakota	GS-0318-09/04 \$35,088	11/22/98	Secretary Office of Automation, U.S. Attorney's Office, South Dakota Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0318-09/04 \$35,088
Immigration Judge Executive Office of Immigration Review, Office of the Chief Immigration Judge	IJ-0905-00/04 \$122,065	12/06/98	Assistant U.S. Attorney Northern District of CA Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys Department of Justice	Presidential Appointee AD-0905-01/00 \$118,300
Web Manager ^b Office of the Assistant Attorney General	GS-0301-14/08 \$84,570	07/18/99	Special Assistant to the Administrator Bureau of Justice Statistics Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0301-15/02 \$83,346
Assistant U.S. Attorney District of New Mexico	AD-0905-24/00 \$59,287	03/22/99	Legislative Assistant U.S. Senate	Legislative Branch Employee \$46,500
Assistant U.S. Attorney U.S. Attorney's Office – Eastern Division, New York	AD-0905-29/00 \$109,113	07/18/99	Deputy Assistant Attorney General Office of the Assistant Attorney General Department of Justice	Noncareer SES ES-0905-00/04 \$125,900

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Executive Resources Program Manager ^b Director, Executive Office for U.S. Attorney	GS-0301-15/02 \$83,346	08/01/99	Special Assistant to Secretary for Scheduling Office of Management and Administration Department of Energy	Schedule C GS-0301-15/02 \$83,346
Policy Analyst ^b Office of the Director, Community Relations Service	GS-0301-14/01 \$68,570	11/07/99	Special Assistant to the Director Community Relations Service Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0301-14/01 \$68,570
Senior Advisor to the Director ^b Executive Office for Immigration Review, Office of the Director	GS-0905-15/10 \$110,028	03/26/00	Professional Staff Member Committee on Appropriations House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee \$124,000
Legal Secretary U.S. Attorney's Office Western District of Louisiana	GS-0986-07/10 \$36,741	02/13/00	Secretary U.S. Attorney's Office Western District of Louisiana Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0318-10/05 \$43,154
Paralegal Assistant U.S. Attorney's Office Eastern Division, Wisconsin	GS-0986-08/10 \$41,092	02/13/00	Secretary to the U.S. Attorney U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern Division, Wisconsin Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0318-10/05 \$43,578
Assistant U.S. Attorney U. S. Attorney's Office, Northern California	AD-0905-21/00 \$71,996	04/23/00	Assistant to the Attorney General Office of the Attorney General Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0905-14/01 \$71,954
Assistant Director Communications Division Office of Community Oriented Policing Service	GS-0301-15/01 \$84,638	06/18/00	Chief of Staff Office of Boards and Divisions Office of Community Oriented Policing Service Department of Justice	Schedule C GS-0301-15/01 \$84,638
Department of Labor				
General Attorney Office of the Solicitor, Division of Civil Rights	GS-0905-12/01 \$48,796	10/24/99	Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration Department of Labor	Schedule C GS-0301-12/01 \$48,796
Management Analyst Office of Small Business Programs	GS-0343-14/07 \$82,284	12/19/99	Special Assistant Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management Department of Labor	Schedule C GS-0301-14/07 \$82,284
Lead Program Analyst Occupational, Safety, & Health Administration	GS-0343-14/04 \$75,427	12/05/99	Legislative Director House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee \$45,000
Program Analyst Occupational Health and Safety Administration Directorate of Federal/State Operations, Office of Cooperative Programs	GS-0343-11/01 \$42,724	3/12/00	Counsel Committee on Budget House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee \$72,100

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Manpower Analyst ^b Employment and Training Administration, Office of the Assistant Secretary	GS-0140-15/10 \$110,028	04/09/00	Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy Office of Policy Development, National Economic Council Executive Office of the President	Executive Office of the President AD-0301-00/00 \$97,500
Department of State				
Program Analyst Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration/Office of Multilateral and External Relations	GS-0343-13/03 \$61,895	09/26/99	Special Assistant Office of the Assistant Secretary Department of State	Schedule C GS-0301-13/03 \$61,895
Program Analysis Office of Europe/Bureau of International Narcotics and Matter/Multilateral Programs	GS-00343-11/10 \$55,541	2/13/00	Foreign Affairs Officer (Special Assistant) Office of Assistant Secretary Department of State	Schedule C GS-00130-12/03 \$54,618
Department of Transportation				
Executive & Legislative Assistant ^b Office of the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board	GS-0301-12/07 \$58,556	04/11/99	Confidential Assistant to the Chairman Office of the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board Department of the Treasury	Schedule C GS-0301-12/07 \$58,556
Department of the Treasury				
Secretary (Typing) Bank Supervision (Policy), Core Policy, Capital Policy Division	OC-0318-08/00 \$33,074	09/26/99	Secretary (Typing) Office of National Drug Control Policy Executive Office of the President	Executive Office of The President GS-0318-08/05 \$34,525
Assistant Director ^b Federal Law Enforcement Training Center	ES-0301-00/03 \$124,185	03/19/00	Assistant to the Attorney General Immediate Office of Attorney General Department of Justice	Noncareer SES ES-0340-00/05 \$130,200
Department of Veterans Affairs				
Staff Director ^b Office of the Deputy Under Secretary For Memorial Activities	GS-0301-15/07 \$101,565	05/07/00	Special Assistant VA Central Office, Office of the Secretary Department of Veterans Affairs	Schedule C GS-0301-15/07 \$101,565
Environmental Protection Agency				
Director Office of Environmental Justice Office of Enforcement & Compliance Assurance	ES-0905-00/05 \$125,900	11/22/98	Associate Solicitor Division of Conservation & Wildlife Department of the Interior	Noncareer SES ES-0905-00/05 \$125,900
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response	GS-0028-15/00 \$126,825	06/18/00	Deputy Assistant Administrator Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Office of the Assistant Administrator Environmental Protection Agency	Noncareer SES ES-0340-00/03 \$126,825

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Equal Employment Opportunity Commission				
Writer Editor ^b Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs	GS-1082-13/02 \$62,920	03/26/00	Media Contact Specialist Office of the Chairwoman, Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Schedule C GS-0301-13/02 \$62,920
International Trade Commission				
International Trade Analyst Office of Investigations, Division C	GS-1101-09/10 \$43,747	02/17/99	Legislative Assistant House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee \$28,000
General Attorney Office of Unfair Import Investigations	GS-0905-14/06 \$79,999	05/01/99	Legislative Assistant U.S. Senate	Legislative Branch Employee \$81,760
Office of Management and Budget				
Chief, State/USIA Branch	ES-0301-00/04 \$133,259	02/15/00	Majority Clerk and Staff Director Subcommittee of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary and related Agencies House of Representatives	Legislative Branch Employee \$138,615

^aSalary includes locality pay

^bNewly established position

Legend:

AD – Administratively determined rates not elsewhere specified

ES – Senior Executive Service

GS – General Schedule

IJ – Immigration Judge Schedule. The code is for use by the Department of Justice only.

NH – Business Management and Technical Management Professional. DOD Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project. The code is for use by the Department of Air Force, Department of Army, Department of Defense, and the Department of Navy only.

OC – Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. The code is for the use by the Office of the Comptroller of Currency only.

ZA – Administrative. The code is for use by the Department of Commerce only.

Comments From the Office of Personnel Management



**UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

SEP 7 2000

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

**Mr. Michael Brostek
Associate Director
Federal Management and Workforce Issues
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548**

Dear Mr. Brostek:

Thank you for the opportunity to review your draft report: *Personnel Practices: Career Appointments Granted Political Appointees from October 1998 through June 2000*. We find the information in the report helpful, and we will be using it as we continue oversight of these actions.

We are actively engaged in our regular presidential election year review process, answering questions from agencies and conducting pre-appointment reviews of proposed movement of political appointees into the competitive service. In addition, the Office of Personnel Management conducts merit staffing reviews of political appointees who are selected for initial career appointments to the Senior Executive Service. The report references our February 18, 2000, memorandum to agencies that describes our review process and asks agencies to monitor all personnel actions carefully during the election period. This guidance is also available on our web site at www.opm.gov/oversight.

Thank you again for asking us to comment on the report. If we can be of any further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely

**Janice R. Lachance
Director**

Related GAO Products

Personnel Practices: Career Appointments of Former Political and Congressional Employees (GAO/GGD-97-165, Sept. 2, 1997).

Personnel Practices: Improper Personnel Actions on Selected CPSC Appointments (GAO/GGD-97-131, June 27, 1997).

Hiring of Former IRS Employees by PBGC (GAO/GGD-97-9R, Oct. 2, 1996).

Personnel Practice: Career Appointments of Legislative, White House, and Political Appointees (GAO/GGD-96-2, Oct. 10, 1995).

Personnel Practices: Selected Characteristics of Recent Ramspeck Act Appointments (GAO/T-GGD-95-173, May 24, 1995).

An Overview of Ramspeck Act Appointments (GAO/T-GGD-95-155, May 8, 1995).

Personnel Practices: Presidential Transition Conversions and Appointments: Changes Needed (GAO/GGD-94-66, May 31, 1994).

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